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Operational activities for development: economic and technical cooperation among developing countries

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Ms. Jana **Simonová** (Czech Republic)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 99 (see A/56/562, para. 2). Action on sub-item (b) was taken at the 22nd and 38th to 40th meetings, on 5 November and 10 to 12 December 2001. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/56/SR.22 and 38-40).

II. Consideration of proposals

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/56/L.14 and A/C.2/56/L.54

2. At its 22nd meeting, on 5 November, the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries" (A/C.2/56/L.14), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
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> "*Stressing* that South-South cooperation, as an important element of international cooperation for development, offers viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and recent United Nations conferences and for

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ensuring their effective and meaningful participation in the newly emerging global economic system,

"*Recognizing* that developing countries have the primary responsibility for promoting and implementing economic and technical cooperation among themselves, and reiterating the need for the international community to support the efforts of the developing countries to expand South-South cooperation through the modality of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries,

"*Reaffirming* its resolutions 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which it endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, 46/159 of 19 December 1991 on technical cooperation among developing countries, 49/96 of 19 December 1994 on a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation and 50/119 of 20 December 1995, 52/205 of 18 December 1997 and 54/226 of 22 December 1999 on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries and a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation, as well as other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries,

"*Reiterating* the continued relevance and validity of the principles and objectives embodied in the Group of 77's Caracas Programme of Action (1981) on economic cooperation among developing countries, the San Jose Declaration and Plan of Action (1997) on South-South cooperation in trade, investment and finance, the Bali Declaration and Plan of Action (1998) on regional and subregional economic cooperation and integration, the Declaration of the South Summit and Havana Programme of Action (2000), which accorded South-South cooperation high priority in order for developing countries to meet new development challenges, as well as other relevant declarations and plans of action,

"*Taking note* of the Ministerial Statement adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 at their twenty-fourth annual meeting, held in New York on 15 September 2000, in which the increased importance and relevance of South-South cooperation was emphasized,

"*Welcoming* the Tehran Consensus adopted by the Group of 77 at the Tenth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries, held at Tehran from 18 to 22 August 2001, which calls for consolidating the South-South platform, building stronger South institutions at the global level, bridging the knowledge and information gap, building broad-based partnerships and mobilizing global support for South-South cooperation,

"1. *Endorses* the report of the High Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries on its twelfth session and the decisions adopted by the High Level Committee at that session;

"2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation;

"3. *Notes with satisfaction* the significant increase and expanded use of South-South cooperation by developing countries as an important and effective instrument of international cooperation and, in this connection, urges developing countries in a position to do so to intensify technical and economic cooperation initiatives at the regional and inter-regional levels in areas such as health, education, training, agriculture, science and new technologies, and in particular information and communication technologies;

"4. *Reiterates* that South-South cooperation should be viewed not as a substitute for, but rather as a complement to North-South cooperation and, in that connection, notes with appreciation the increasing number of developed countries and development foundations supporting South-South cooperation activities through a variety of triangular arrangements, including direct support or cost-sharing arrangements, joint research and development projects and third-country training programmes;

"5. *Notes with appreciation* the contributions made by a number of countries to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation, and to the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, and invites all countries to contribute to the Trust Funds in support of a revitalized South-South platform designed to benefit developing countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and small island developing States;

"6. *Recognizes* the urgent need to build stronger South institutions, including policy research and development institutions and centres of excellence, especially at the regional, inter-regional and global levels, and to have linkages among them through networking arrangements, and by making more effective use of the South's institutional capacity, so as to improve South-South knowledge-sharing, capacity-building and information flow, and policy analysis and coordination among developing countries on major development issues of common concern;

"7. *Requests* all organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system to make concerted and intensified efforts to effectively mainstream the use of South-South cooperation by way of giving such cooperation appropriate consideration in the design, formulation and implementation of their regular programmes;

"8. *Calls upon* all relevant United Nations organizations and multilateral institutions to consider increasing allocations of human, technical and financial resources for South-South cooperation and, in this context, welcomes decision 2001/2, of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund, in which the Board requested the Administrator to consider reviewing, in the context of the successor programming arrangements, the allocation of additional resources for activities involving technical cooperation among developing countries;

"9. *Recognizes* the need for raising public awareness of and support for South-South cooperation as a dynamic form of international development cooperation which can give real content to the concept of ownership and partnership, and for this reason, welcomes the Tehran Consensus proposal to

launch the first International Decade on South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation;

"10. *Requests* the Secretary-General, through coordination of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries of the United Nations Development Programme and in consultation with relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions in the South, to submit to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session a report on requirements and possible activities to be carried out during the proposed International Decade for South-South Cooperation and the United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation;

"11. *Reiterates its request* to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to ensure that the separate identity of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries is maintained and to further strengthen its institutional capacity through mobilizing additional resources to enable it to execute its increased responsibilities effectively as the United Nations system focal point on South-South cooperation;

"12. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled 'Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries', and in that context requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to submit to it at that session a report on the state of South-South cooperation and a comprehensive report on the implementation of the present resolution."

3. At its 38th meeting, on 10 December, the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Garfield Barnwell (Guyana), introduced a draft resolution entitled "Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries" (A/C.2/56/L.54), which he submitted on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.14.

4. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.54 (see para. 11).

5. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.54, draft resolution A/C.2/56/L.14 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

B. Draft decision A/C.2/56/L.64

6. At its 39th meeting, on 11 December, on the proposal of the Chairman, Francisco Seixas Da Costa (Portugal), and on an exceptional basis, the Committee allowed the representative of Namibia to introduce, on behalf of the Southern African Development Community, a draft decision entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community" (A/C.2/56/L.64), which read:

"The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 37/248 of 21 December 1982 and all other relevant General Assembly resolutions on the promotion of

cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community:

"(a) Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community,

"(b) Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session a sub-item entitled 'Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community'."

7. At the 40th meeting on 12 December, the Secretary read out an oral revision to the draft decision, replacing subparagraph (b) with the following:

"(b) *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session, under the item entitled 'Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations', a sub-item entitled 'Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community'."

8. At the same meeting, the representative of Namibia further orally revised the draft decision by adding the following words at the end of subparagraph (b):

"and requests the Secretary-General to update the report on this question and submit it to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session".

9. Also at the same meeting, the representative of Belgium, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union, orally amended subparagraph (b) by inserting the word "current" before the word "report".

10. Also at the 40th meeting, the Committee adopted the draft decision, as orally revised and amended (see para. 12).

III. Recommendations of the Second Committee

11. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries

The General Assembly,

Stressing that South-South cooperation, as an important element of international cooperation for development, offers viable opportunities for developing countries in their individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions and recent United Nations conferences, and for ensuring their effective and meaningful participation in the newly emerging global economic system,

Recognizing that developing countries have the primary responsibility for promoting and implementing economic and technical cooperation among themselves, and reiterating the need for the international community to support the efforts of the developing countries to expand South-South cooperation through the modality of economic and technical cooperation among developing countries,

Reaffirming its resolutions 33/134 of 19 December 1978, in which it endorsed the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[1] 46/159 of 19 December 1991 on technical cooperation among developing countries, 49/96 of 19 December 1994 on a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation, 50/119 of 20 December 1995, 52/205 of 18 December 1997 and 54/226 of 22 December 1999 on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries and a United Nations conference on South-South cooperation, as well as other relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on economic and technical cooperation among developing countries,

Recalling the principles and objectives embodied in the Caracas Programme of Action,[2] adopted at the High-level Conference on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries, held at Caracas in May 1981, the San José Declaration and Plan of Action[3] adopted by the Group of 77 at the South-South Conference on Trade, Investment and Finance, held at San José from 13 to 15 January 1997, the Bali Declaration on Regional and Subregional Economic Cooperation of the Developing Countries,[4] and the Bali Plan of Action on Regional and Subregional Economic Cooperation of the Developing Countries,[5] adopted by the Group of 77 High-level Conference on Regional and Subregional Economic Cooperation of the Developing Countries, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 2 to 5 December 1998, and the Declaration of the South Summit and the Havana Programme of Action,[6] adopted by the South Summit of the Group of 77, held at Havana from 10 to 14 April 2000, which accorded South-South cooperation high priority in order for developing countries to meet new development challenges, as well as other relevant declarations and plans of action,

Taking note of the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Group of 77 at their twenty-fifth annual meeting,[7] held in New York on 16 November 2001, in which the increased importance and relevance of South-South cooperation was emphasized,

Taking note also of the Tehran Consensus, adopted at the Tenth Meeting of the Intergovernmental Follow-up and Coordination Committee on Economic Cooperation among Developing Countries of the Group of 77[8] held at Tehran from 18 to 22 August 2001, which calls for consolidating the South-South platform, building stronger South institutions at the global level, bridging the knowledge and information gap, building broad-based partnerships and mobilizing global support for South-South cooperation,

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[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1979* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

[2] A/36/333 and Corr.1, annex.

[3] A/C.2/52/8, annex.

[4] A/53/739, annex I.

[5] Ibid., annex II.

[6] A/55/74, annexes I and II.

[7] A/56/647, annex.

[8] A/56/358 and Corr.1.

1. *Endorses* the report of the High Level Committee on the Review of Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries on its twelfth session[9] and the decisions adopted by the High-Level Committee at that session;[10]

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation;[11]

3. *Notes with satisfaction* the significant increase and expanded use of South-South cooperation by developing countries as an important and effective instrument of international cooperation and, in this connection, urges developing countries in a position to do so to intensify technical and economic cooperation initiatives at the regional and interregional levels in areas such as health, education, training, agriculture, science and new technologies, and in particular information and communication technologies;

4. *Reiterates* that South-South cooperation should be viewed not as a substitute for but rather as a complement to North-South cooperation, and, in that connection, notes with appreciation the increasing number of developed countries and development foundations supporting South-South cooperation activities through a variety of triangular arrangements, including direct support or cost-sharing arrangements, joint research and development projects and third-country training programmes;

5. *Emphasizes* the need for concerted action by developing countries and their development partners, including relevant international organizations, with a view to strengthening cooperation and collaboration among developing countries at the subregional, regional and interregional levels;

6. *Notes with appreciation* the contributions made by a number of countries to the Voluntary Trust Fund for the Promotion of South-South Cooperation and to the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for Economic and Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, and invites all countries to contribute to the trust funds in support of a revitalized South-South platform that is designed to benefit developing countries, especially the least developed, landlocked and small island developing countries;

7. *Recognizes* the need to strengthen institutions of the South, including policy research and development institutions and centres of excellence, especially at the regional and interregional levels, with a view to making more effective use of the institutional capacity of the South through, inter alia, improved South-South knowledge-sharing, networking, capacity-building and flow of information and policy analysis and coordination among developing countries on major development issues of common concern;

8. *Requests* all organizations and agencies of the United Nations development system to make concerted and intensified efforts to effectively mainstream the use of South-South cooperation by giving such cooperation appropriate consideration in the design, formulation and implementation of their regular programmes;

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[9] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 39* (A/56/39).

[10] Ibid., annex I.

[11] A/56/465.

9. *Calls upon* all relevant United Nations organizations and multilateral institutions to consider increasing allocations of human, technical and financial resources for South-South cooperation, and, in this context, recalls decision 2001/2 of the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Population Fund, in which the Board requested the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to consider reviewing, in the context of the successor programming arrangements, the allocation of additional resources for activities involving technical cooperation among developing countries, taking into account the overall financial situation and the need for appropriate resources for other activities;

10. *Recognizes* the need for raising public awareness of and support for South-South cooperation as a dynamic form of international development cooperation which can give real content to the concept of ownership and partnership, and, for this reason, takes note of the Tehran Consensus proposal to launch the first international decade on South-South cooperation and the United Nations day for South-South cooperation;[12]

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General, through coordination of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries of the United Nations Development Programme and in consultation with relevant organizations and agencies of the United Nations system and other relevant institutions in the South, to include in the report to be submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session concrete measures for promoting and facilitating South-South cooperation, taking into account all relevant initiatives and proposals in this regard;

12. *Reiterates its request* to the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme to ensure that the separate identity of the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries is maintained and that the Unit is supported so that it may fully implement its mandate and responsibilities as a focal point of the United Nations system for South-South cooperation;

13. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-eighth session the sub-item entitled "Economic and technical cooperation among developing countries", and requests the Secretary-General, in collaboration with the Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, to submit to it at that session a comprehensive report on the state of South-South cooperation and the implementation of the present resolution.

* * *

12. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decision:

Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community

The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 37/248 of 21 December 1982 and all other relevant General Assembly resolutions on the promotion of cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community:

[12] See A/56/358 and Corr.1, annex, sect. 5.

(a) Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community,[13]

(b) Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-seventh session, under the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations", a sub-item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Southern African Development Community", and requests the Secretary-General to update the current report on this question and submit it to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

[13] A/56/134 and Add.1.